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the zone plan is given in chapter ix. This deals with topics such as the sphere of the supervisor and how he should organize his time and shows how the use of local talent, publicity, and such agencies may be enlisted for the success of a like understanding.

The work is valuable in that it demonstrates a workable plan for rural-school supervision at reasonable cost. It might profitably be used by district, county, and state superintendents in obtaining financial aid for supervisory undertakings. Moreover, it shows by objective evidence that supervision of elementary subjects produces results sufficient to justify the cost.

Modern History.—Though the author of a new book¹ on United States history does not indicate the design of his work, it may be inferred that he is seeking to serve the busy intelligent citizen who desires to be informed as to the general trend of affairs in his country since 1877. He probably has in mind, also, the large undergraduate classes of the colleges and universities of the country and possibly the reference shelf of the best high schools.

The style, which is simple, lively, and forceful, and the general scope of the book are in a measure adapted to any or all of these purposes. The author provides numerous bibliographical notes, which reveal an unusual knowledge of the sources of the period, and a more exhaustive index than is usually found in works of this nature. The book includes discussions of literature, ideals, sports, amusements, and many other topics not ordinarily found in historical texts; it contains useful and interesting information which it would be difficult to find elsewhere. To the style, to the content, and to the mechanical aids one will find little objection.

The method of treatment is somewhat disappointing, however. It might have been hoped that a man of Professor Paxson's equipment would present the unfolding of several of the outstanding and characteristic movements of the last half-century in such a way as to leave in the mind of the ordinary layman a definite conception of the trend of the times. Instead of this, one finds that he has rigidly adhered to the chronological order, presenting fifty-seven chapters the headings of which do not always give a definite idea of the topics discussed. As a result, no single movement is given a complete, consecutive treatment, and the historical novice at least must be left in considerable confusion. Careful students of the recent history of the United States, like Professor Paxson, doubtless have noted certain well-defined processes, movements, and tendencies, such as the growth of large-scale industries and of organized labor; the struggle between capital and labor; the reform movement which has attempted to free politics from the undue influence of big business, and to apply scientific methods to governmental administration; the transition from an individualistic to a socialized democracy, accompanied by the enlargement of the powers of the state; the growing interest in and influence

¹ FREDERIC L. PAXSON. *Recent History of the United States*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1921. Pp. xii+603.

upon world-politics which virtually made it inevitable that the United States be drawn into the Great War. But one looks in vain through this book for an orderly, uninterrupted treatment of these topics. Of course, they may be traced to their origin and followed to the present by running the index, but only the mature student who knows of these movements will do this.

A few illustrations will serve to make this defect very evident. Chapter viii, which is entitled "Reform," is confined to the discussion of the reforms of some two or three years subsequent to 1882, just as if the author would not be compelled to discuss reform in a large number of subsequent chapters. Another chapter entitled, "Extension of Government Control," is confined almost entirely to the enlargement of the powers of the federal government; but after the interposition of almost a hundred pages, the author returns to the subject with a chapter on "Federal Control." Chapter ii presents a discussion of "Civil Strife"; chapter xiii is entitled "Labor Ideals"; chapter xx is headed "Industrial Unrest"; the title of the forty-sixth chapter is "Labor"; and a half-dozen other chapters, with headings which do not faintly suggest the idea, give considerable attention to labor and its problems. Five chapters separate a discussion on "World Policy" from a treatment of "World Power."

Professor Paxson, nevertheless, shows a very unusual grasp of the details of the recent history of the United States and, with the possible exception of an infatuation for Roosevelt, seems free from all bias. Perhaps he should not be censured too severely for not having presented these details so as to set forth with unerring perspective an orderly unfolding of underlying forces, a neat progression of events. This is the great difficulty confronted by writers of contemporary history, and few indeed have been able to surmount it.

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A contribution to curriculum-making technique.—Public-school officials, both lay and professional, are beginning to realize the need of working their way out of the wilderness of curricula in which they now find themselves. The method of egress from this maze is developing slowly but encouragingly through the various studies based on scientific analysis of the objectives of education. There is an undisputed demand for the particularization of these objectives if our educational processes are to be fruitful. Even a hasty analysis of any industrial pursuit yields a rich variety of specifics upon which to base curricula.

A recent study¹ in the field of transportation, made under the direction of the University of California, has added materially to the fund of information needed by vocational counselors and school administrators and has contributed

¹ R. E. BERRY, *An Analysis of Clerical Positions for Juniors in Railway Transportation*. "Part-Time Education Series, No. 6," Bulletin No. 5. Berkeley, California: University of California. Pp. 104.